



**House Committee  
on Health and Human Services Appropriations  
May 5, 2016**

**Department of Health and Human Services  
Child and Family Services Review  
Program Improvement Plan**



# Child and Family Services Review (CSFR)

- Collaborative effort between federal and state governments
- Promotes continuous quality improvement in child welfare systems nationally
- Identifies both strengths and areas needing improvement in state child welfare programs
- Enables states to utilize the information to create strategic plans for improving its child welfare system



# Child and Family Services Review cont.

- N.C.'s last review was conducted in 2007
- The Children's Bureau made several changes to the CFSR process and items and indicators relevant for performance based on lessons learned during the second round of reviews, and in response to feedback from the child welfare field.
- As such, a state's performance in the third round of the CFSRs is not directly comparable to its performance in the second round.



# Child and Family Services Review cont.

- The third round of the CFSR assesses state performance in regard to seven child and family outcomes, and seven systemic factors.
- For a state to be in substantial conformity with the seven child and family outcomes, both the national standards for each relevant statewide aggregate data indicator must be met and 95 percent of the cases reviewed must be rated as having been substantially achieved for each outcome.



# Child Welfare Outcomes (7)

- **Safety 1:** Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect
- **Safety 2:** Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate
- **Permanency 1:** Children have permanency and stability in their living situations
- **Permanency 2:** The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children



## **Child Welfare Outcomes (7) cont.**

- **Well-Being 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs**
- **Well-Being 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs**
- **Well-Being 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs**



# County Case Reviews

- **105 case (59 foster care and 46 in-home cases) reviews were conducted via a State Case Review process in Buncombe, Craven, Cumberland, Durham, Hoke, Jackson, Mecklenburg, Pitt, Scotland, Swain, Wake, and Wilson counties between April 1, 2015 and Sept. 30, 2015**



# Systemic Factors (7)

- Statewide information system
- Case review system to ensure the agency and courts achieve permanency in a timely manner, and families are engaged in the process
- Quality assurance system statewide to ensure children are provided quality services that protect their health and safety
- Staff and provider training ensures that staff statewide are properly trained to assess cases, and deliver services





## **Systemic Factors (7) cont.**

- **Service array and resource development that is accessible, and appropriate to meet individualized child and family needs**
- **Agency responsiveness to the community through ongoing consultation with service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child and family serving agencies**
- **Foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention**



# CFSR – Program Improvement Plan (PIP)

- Development of the plan began prior to the receipt of the final report
- January 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> 270+ stakeholders and partners
  - Review the report
  - Share observations and thoughts that contributed to the functioning of the system
  - Explore “root causes”
  - Identify opportunities for further exploration of the opportunities and challenges



# **CFSR - Program Improvement Plan cont.**

- **Five themes were identified and workgroups met March 7th – 17th:**
  - **Court Collaboration**
    - **Issues to timeliness for hearings, including Termination of Parental Rights**
  - **County Practice**
    - **Helping front-line social workers identify needs and arrange appropriate services**
  - **System Infrastructure**
    - **Quality Assurance and management oversight**
  - **Stakeholder Engagement**
    - **Community responsiveness and special populations**
  - **Service Collaboration**
    - **Access and effectiveness of behavioral health services, domestic violence services, and parenting supports**



# **CFSR - Program Improvement Plan cont.**

- **Goals** – Broad areas that address the findings in the report, as guided by input from federal staff
- **Strategies** – Components that will have a positive impact on the goal area
- **Activities** – Specific actions with timelines



# Goal 1: Clear performance expectations

- Improve the outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being through the establishment of clear performance expectations for practice in Child Protective Services assessments, In-Home services and Foster Care services.
  - Strengthen the policies and other written guidance materials provided to county agencies in regards to the initial and ongoing assessment of risk and safety and making appropriate decisions based on thorough assessments.
  - Supported in the budget request for additional funds for contractual resources to assist in developing training materials.



# Goal 1: Clear performance expectations cont.

- Enhance the training system to support the performance expectations for initial and ongoing risk and safety assessments and appropriate case decision making.
- County agencies are challenged to get staff to the trainings that are provided by the state. Additional staff will assist the state in providing training in additional locations.
- Develop a “supervisor academy” with content developed aimed at ensuring the consistent application of practices of assessing risk and safety and case decisions are made and implemented.



# **Goal 1: Clear performance expectations cont.**

- Collaborating with public and private universities, this will begin to develop capacity at the local level to ensure the clarified practice instructions are adhered to consistently.**
- Strengthen the capacity of NC DSS to provide technical assistance to local agencies to address areas of need in support of the consistent application of policies and practices.**
- Supporting counties to implement identified system improvements, support for additional staff (4) will increase the state capacity to support county improvement plans.**



## **Goal 2: Statewide quality assurance system**

- **Improve the statewide quality assurance system and a functioning technical assistance support model.**
  - **Beginning to develop a data driven system in a complex environment such as Child Welfare requires staff who understand how to transform raw data into actionable information reflective of practice performance.**





## **Goal 3: Permanency outcomes for children**

- **Improve the permanency outcomes for children through collaboration with the judicial system.**
  - **Data analytical capacity will be key to identifying counties and judicial district specific issues needing improvement.**



## **Goal 4: Cross-system service provision**

- **Improve cross-system service provision to improve safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children and families.**
  - **Establish performance expectations for serving children and families who are engaged with the Child Welfare system and the LME/MCO behavioral health system.**
  - **Strengthen the foster and adoptive parent recruitment and retention plan to increase the capacity of the substitute care system.**



## Goal 5: Statewide data quality

- Enhance the statewide data quality, collection and dissemination of information regarding services provided.
  - Continue the development of the NC FAST, Project 4 in support of the Child Welfare for effective and efficient delivery of programs and services.
  - Develop and implement the CPS Pilot project identified in SL 2014-100 Section 12C.1.(e) “...to enhance coordination of services and information among county departments of social services, local law enforcement agencies, the court system, guardian ad litem programs, and other agencies...”



# Enhance Child Safety Through Federal Improvement Plan Implementation

- Improve program performance through data quality and analytical capacity.  
(3 new state positions)
- Strengthen the Child Welfare workforce using competency and performance based training and implement a supervisory academy.
- Enhancements to In-Home services to families in order to provide services in the least restrictive setting, supporting safety while keeping families together.



# Enhance Oversight Accountability of County Child Welfare Services

- **Family Foster Home Licensure**  
(4 new state positions)
- **County Technical Assistance**  
(4 new state positions)
- **Enhance Training Delivery**  
(7 new state positions)



# Enhance Child Safety Through Child Fatality Reviews

- Mandated in § 143B-150.20 to review child deaths meeting specific situations.
- Identified need to review cases more timely and enhance ability to ensure recommendations are enacted.  
(5 new state positions)



# Measurement Plan

- Federal expectations center on the use of the case review instrument and protocol known as the On Site Review Instrument (OSRI) to measure the impact of the program improvement plan on the outcomes.
- OSRI to be used in 10 counties who have built the capacity to review cases in accordance with the federal expectations.
- State staff will randomly sample 100 additional cases from the remaining 90 counties each year.



# Questions